

Freetown Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 24, 2022, 4:00pm
Police Station Community Room
15 Memorial Drive, East Freetown, MA

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Call to Order

Selectmen Matthews called the meeting to order at 4:08pm. Selectmen Grunwald, Selectmen Zager, Interim Town Administrator Deb Pettey, Executive Assistant Lu-Ann Souza and Administrative Assistant Lola Furtado were also present.

Personnel Board

Discussion/possible action on the following topics:

1. Accept these resignations
 - a. Paul M. Demello as police constable effective 12/6/21.
 - b. Christopher Nils McKay from Planning Board, Soil Board and Zoning Board of Appeals effective 1/18/22.
2. Approve these appointments
 - a. David Thibodeau as the Data Acquisition/Infrastructure Maintenance 1 effective 2/1/22-6/30/22.
 - b. Timm McIntosh to Library Planning Committee effective 1/24/22-6/30/22.
 - c. Robert Kerstiens to Taunton River Stewardship Council effective 1/24/22-6/30/22.
- Motion to approve appointments a, b and c and accept the resignations in a & b was made by Selectmen Matthews and seconded by Selectmen Zager
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
3. Discuss, and vote on exemption to allow Keven Desmarais to work temporarily as both the Board of Health Agent and Data Acquisition/Infrastructure Maintenance effective 1/18/22-2/28/22.

Deb Pettey let the Board know she had reached out to Town Counsel who advised as long as Mr. Desmarais filled out the disclosure form b and it is filed with the Town Clerk; he would be able work both positions. Ms. Pettey also noted that this will be crucial to cross train the new person in the water and sewer department. Board of Health Agent can get his previous rate for the water dept, must do that work outside of his normal work hours. He will be paid at existing grate of Board of Health. If he goes over 40 hours, he will be compensated at the overtime rate for the water dept. Board of Health Agent will only do emergency work and help train new DA/IM 1 as needed when he first starts on 2/7/22. Selectmen Grunwald asked when is an emergency? Deb Pettey noted there was a water main break to someone's house, and someone hit a water hydrant so in both cases Mr. Desmarais went out and shut the water off for both situations. Selectmen Zager asked what if we have a water main break during regular hours? Deb Pettey said we would then have to let Mr. Desmarais go out and take care of that until the new hire starts on 2/7/22. She continued that for the short term this arrangement is in the best interest of the Town.

- Motion to approve the exemption to allow Keven Desmarais to work temporarily as both the Board of Health Agent and Data Acquisition/Infrastructure Maintenance effective 1/18/22-2/28/22.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

Board of Selectmen

Discussion/possible action on the following topics:

4. Discussion and vote to approve the Ambulance Abatements totaling \$178,523.21 and write offs totaling \$28,783.61 totaling \$207,306.82.
 - Motion to approve the Ambulance Abatements totaling \$178,523.21 and write offs totaling \$28,783.61 totaling \$207,306.82 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote
5. Discussion, and vote to approve the revised agreement between the Town of Freetown and Netrospect effective 1/19/2022-6/30/22.

Deb Pettey explained that the Fire Department would like to continue having Spinnaker Technologies be their IT Support company as the Fire and Police Departments have integrated systems and Police are working with Spinnaker Technologies, so the Fire Chief feels it's in everyone's best interest to have the same company. Deb Pettey noted that she has had a conversation with the new IT Support Company, Netrospect and they are fine with this change in agreement and noted that he would like to have the opportunity to also provide services to Police & Fire in the future.

- Motion to approve the revised agreement between the Town of Freetown and Netrospect effective 1/19/2022-6/30/22 was made by Selectmen Zager and seconded by Selectmen Grunwald.
 - Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.
6. Discuss and vote on payment of COVID time.

The Town was required to pay for COVID time off through December 2020. Deb Pettey noted that we have had a few cases of COVID with Town employees and there is current program with the State of Massachusetts that employees can receive up to \$850 in paid COVID time off if they are exposed, caring for a family member with COVID or have COVID themselves. There is an opportunity for the Town to be refunded from the State for this time off. Deb Pettey noted she is working on getting refunded by the State. Ms. Pettey asked for guidance from the Board of Selectmen on employees utilizing their sick time for COVID time off after they have utilized the \$850 from the State – or – does the Board want to pay up to 40 hours for COVID time and not require the employee to use their sick time. Deb Pettey noted the \$850 from the state will expire in April 2022. She continued that she could look for more information. Selectmen Matthews recalls a special agreement with Police & Fire CBA's. He asked Deb Pettey to get some additional information and we will discuss further at a later meeting. Deb Pettey also said there may be a way to pull some of this time through ARPA funds. The other thing to consider is if someone is out do we require proof of positive COVID result? The Fire Dept. does require a positive test. Selectmen

Matthews noted that if someone is sick and may have COVID we really want them to stay home. Selectmen Zager agreed.

Town Administrator's Report

Discussion/possible action on the following topics:

Deb Pettey noted that Lu-Ann Souza applied for a grant for Air Sensors and the Town was awarded this grant. We will need to install them when they arrive. Selectmen Zager noted he recalled these would be on telephone poles so he encouraged us to check with owner of the poles to make sure it is fine.

Old Business:

Potential discussion on pending items – action will not be taken at this meeting:

- Council on Aging building project

- Motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 4:29pm by Selectmen Grunwald and seconded by Selectmen Zager.
- Vote: was approved in a unanimous roll call vote.

List of Exhibits and Documents utilized by the Board during this meeting.

- Agenda
- Letters of resignation:
 - o Paul DeMellos and Christopher Nils McKay
- Appoint slips and letters of interest for:
 - o Timm McIntosh
 - o David Thibodeau
 - o Robert Kerstiens
- Email from Attorney Fair on Keven Desmarais doing two Town jobs temporarily
- Ambulance abatement and write offs note
- Revised agreement between Netrospect and the Town of Freetown
- Notice of vacancy for Taunton River Stewardship Council
- Letter from water and sewer commission requesting a part time temporary staff member

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "LuAnn Souza", written in a cursive style.

Lu-Ann Souza
Executive Assistant